



Department of Energy
National Nuclear Security Administration
Office of Secure Transportation
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Cover Sheet

Proposed Action: Construct Steel Building on already disturbed land for use by Federal Agents from the Office of Secure Transportation as an administrative and training facility.

Type of Statement: Final Environmental Assessment and Unsigned Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)

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Department of Defense
United States Air Force
Finding of No Significant Impact
for the
Proposed Construction of an Operations and Training Facility
at
Kirtland Air Force Base
Albuquerque, New Mexico

Prepared By:
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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Construction of an Operations and Training Facility
For the National Nuclear Security Administration
Office of Secure Transportation
Kirtland Air Force Base
Albuquerque, New Mexico

Pursuant to the Council on Environmental Quality's regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (40 CFR Part 1500-1508), Department of Defense Directive 6050.1, and Air Force Instruction 32-7061, the Department of Energy, National Nuclear Security Administration has conducted an environmental assessment on the consequences of constructing and operating out of a new facility at the Office of Secure Transportation's existing Driver Training Track on Kirtland Air Force Base.

FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT: *The Environmental Assessment for Construction of an Operations and Training Facility* (Tab 2) provides sufficient evidence and analysis to determine that a Finding of No Significant Impact is appropriate for the Proposed Action. The environmental assessment documents the evidence and analysis in the following chapters: 1. Introduction; 2. Description of the Proposed Action and Alternatives; 3. Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences; and 4. Cumulative Effects. The environmental assessment was prepared by the National Nuclear Security Administration's Office of Secure Transportation. Two alternatives were developed for this assessment – Build/operate and No build/operate (no action). The environmental assessment analyzed the relevant environmental factors at the existing Driver Training Track located in Chapter 3. Environmental factors included land use, air quality, noise, water resources, hazardous material/waste and solid waste, safety and occupational health, biological resources, cultural resources, soils and geology, and socioeconomics.

A detailed description of the Proposed Action and its environmental consequences are presented in the environmental assessment (Chapter 2). In summary, construction measures would occur on previously disturbed ground and on existing

asphalt. Analyses performed in the environmental assessment (Chapter 3) concluded that potential adverse effects of the Proposed Action would be minimal. There are no threatened or endangered species issues. There are no migratory bird issues. There are no prairie dog or burrowing owl issues. There are no cultural or heritage issues. Engineering and administrative controls or considerations that serve to lessen any potential for adverse environmental effects have been incorporated as integral features of the Proposed Action. No short-term or long-term adverse effects are expected to occur to the relevant resources analyzed. The Proposed Action would enable the Office of Secure Transportation to meet its increasing manning levels and workloads.

There are no ongoing activities and no other future foreseeable activities planned in the Driver Training Track area. Therefore, the incremental effects of the Proposed Action, when combined with the effects resulting from common issues of actions taken by the Department of Energy, Department of Defense, federal, state, and local entities, would not result in cumulatively significant effects.

PREDECISIONAL DRAFT REVIEW AND COMMENT: On 11 March 2004, the Department of Energy, National Nuclear Security Administration invited review and comment on the draft environmental assessment from the state of New Mexico and the Pueblo of Isleta. In addition, the National Nuclear Security Administration made the draft environmental assessment available to the general public at the same time it was provided to the state and Pueblo. The availability of the environmental assessment to the public was accomplished by placing it in the Department of Energy's Public Reading Room located in the University of New Mexico's Zimmerman Library in Albuquerque. A notice was also placed in the local newspaper announcing the availability of the draft environmental assessment for review. The review and comment period ended on 31 March 2004. No comments were received on the draft environmental assessment.

AGENCY CONSULTATIONS: Because of the absence of threatened and endangered species and their habitat, the National Nuclear Security Administration is not required to engage in consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, according to Section 7 requirements under the Endangered Species Act. Additionally, no consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office is required because of the absence of cultural and heritage resources. National Nuclear Security Administration did consult with Sandia National Laboratories for environmental resource and geographical information system data.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Based on my review of the facts and the environmental analysis contained in the environmental assessment, and as summarized above, I find the proposed decision of the Air Force to allow the Department of Energy, National Nuclear Security Administration to construct an operations and training facility at Kirtland Air Force Base, New Mexico, will not have a significant impact on the human environment insofar as the Proposed Action involves Air Force property or programs or requires Air Force approval. Therefore, an environmental impact statement is not required and will not be prepared by the Air Force.



RICHARD V. REYNOLDS
Lieutenant General, USAF
Vice Commander

7 JUN 04
Date

Final

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

for

Construction of an Operations and Training Facility

Office of Secure Transportation, Albuquerque, New Mexico

Department of Energy, National Nuclear Security Administration

April 2004

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ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Construction of an Operations and Training Facility Office of Secure Transportation, Albuquerque, New Mexico

1.0 INTRODUCTION

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires Federal agency officials to consider the environmental consequences of their proposed actions before decisions are made. In complying with NEPA, U.S. Department of Energy and National Nuclear Security Administration follow the Council on Environmental Quality regulations (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 1500 - 1508 (40 CFR 1500 -1508)) and Department of Energy's NEPA implementing procedures (10 CFR 1021). The purpose of an environmental assessment is to provide Federal decision makers with sufficient evidence and analysis to determine whether to prepare an environmental impact statement or issue a Finding of No Significant Impact.

At this time, the National Nuclear Security Administration proposes to construct and operate a new facility to quarter and train its new Federal Agent workforce at Kirtland Air Force Base located in Albuquerque, New Mexico (Figure 1). The proposed site is administered by the United States Air Force and permitted to National Nuclear Security Administration for use by the Office of Secure Transportation. This environmental assessment has been prepared to assess the potential environmental consequences of constructing an operations and training facility and a No Action Alternative.

The objectives of this environmental assessment are to (1) describe the underlying purpose and need for Department of Energy, National Nuclear Security Administration action; (2) describe the Proposed Action and identify and describe any reasonable alternatives that satisfy the purpose and need for agency action; (3) describe baseline environmental conditions at Office of Secure Transportation Driver Training Track; (4) analyze the potential indirect, direct, and cumulative effects to the existing environment from implementation of the Proposed Action; and (5) compare the effects of the Proposed Action with the No Action Alternative and other reasonable alternatives.

For the purposes of compliance with NEPA, reasonable alternatives are identified as being those that meet National Nuclear Security Administration's purpose and need for action by virtue of timeliness, suitability, and availability to Office of Secure Transportation. The environmental assessment process provides National Nuclear Security Administration with environmental information that can be used in developing mitigative actions, if necessary, to minimize or avoid potential adverse effects to the quality of the human environment and natural ecosystems should National Nuclear Security Administration decide to proceed with the Proposed Action of constructing a new federal agent facility at Kirtland Air Force Base. Ultimately, the goal of NEPA, and this environmental assessment, is to aid Air Force officials in making decisions based on an understanding of environmental consequences and in taking actions that protect, restore, and enhance the environment.

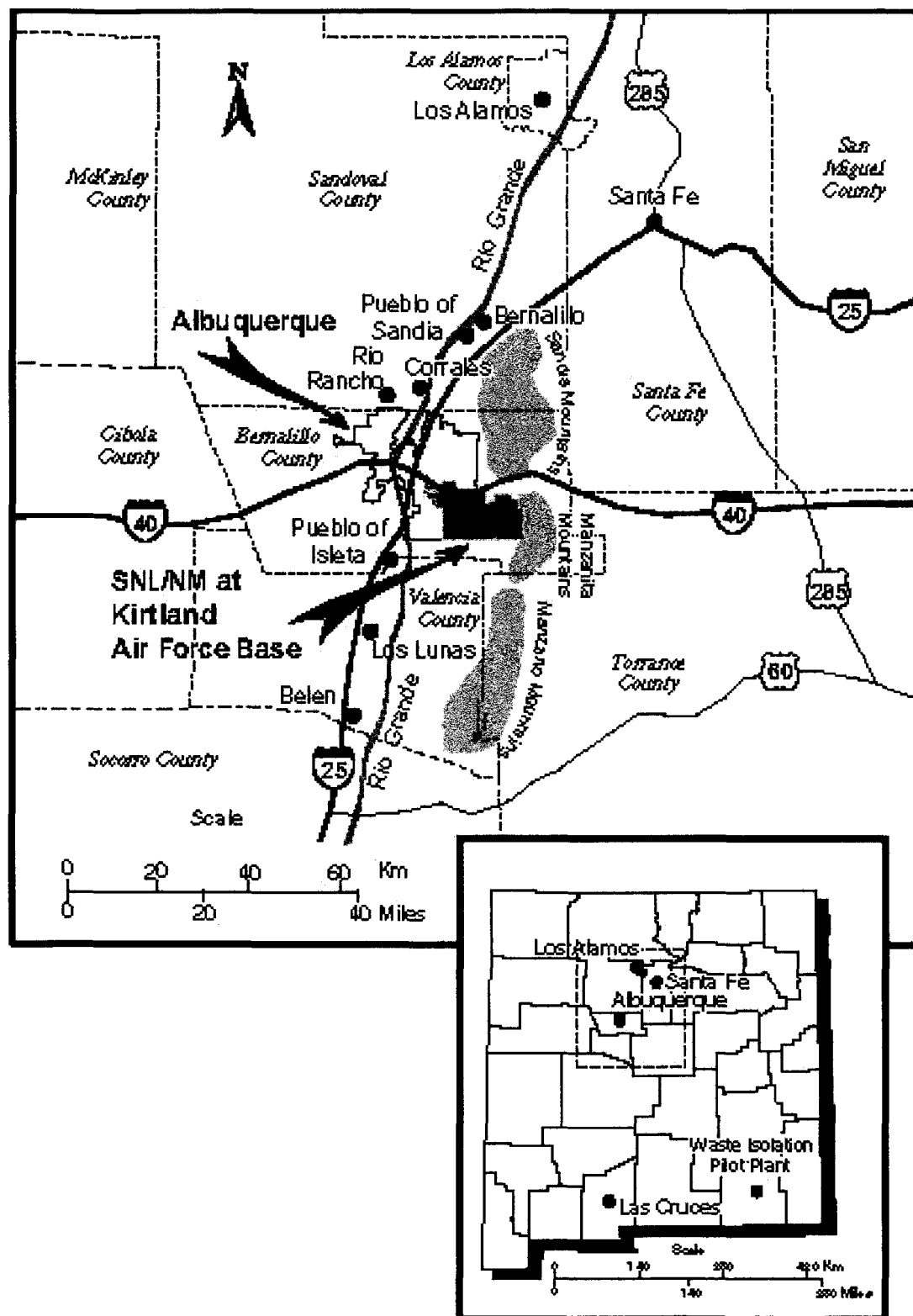


Figure 1. Location of Kirtland Air Force Base

1.1 Purpose and Need for the Action

The purpose for the action is to support a primary Department of Energy, National Nuclear Security Administration mission of providing for the safe and secure movement and continual surveillance of government-owned special nuclear material, weapons, and weapon components between National Nuclear Security Administration sites and Department of Defense military installations. The National Nuclear Security Administration performs this mission through its Transportation Safeguards Program. The current and future workload has greatly increased since 2000; therefore, the agent commands have been steadily increasing their manning levels to match the current and future workload requirements. The projected increase in manning levels is currently on track for reaching maximum required in 2008. The mission of the agents is two-fold: moving government assets and training agents to move those assets. The current trailers are not adequate to quarter this increase in staffing and there is no more area at the current command post on NCO Bypass road to place additional quarters for office space and for the training of agents. The underlying need is space and facilities to quarter this increase in staffing.

2.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

2.1 The Proposed Action

The Office of Secure Transportation is proposing to construct a new Operations and Training Facility at the Office of Secure Transportation Driver Training Track, Kirtland Air Force Base, Albuquerque, New Mexico. The Driver Training Track, permitted to Department of Energy, is located north of Pennsylvania Avenue between the Kirtland horse stables and the National Nonproliferation Security Institute (Figure 2). Some of the operations at the existing Federal Agent Facility located on NCO Bypass road at Kirtland Air Force Base would be relocated to this new building (Figure 3). The facility would be constructed at the smaller asphalted pad located north of the larger, main driving pad (Figure 4). The facility would be approximately 23,000 square feet, one story, and of steel frame/concrete slab construction. The new facility would contain staff and agent offices, weapons armory, equipment storage room, locker rooms, restrooms, a break area, a ready room, conference areas and large training/conference theater, and space for training via computer interactions (Figure 5). The existing asphalt at the smaller pad would be removed to accommodate the new facility.

Three explosive containers (conex) and three Golan bunkers would be located on the southeast corner of the larger, main drive pad (Figure 4). The Golan bunkers would store 1.2.2E type explosives. The conex would store 1.3 and 1.4 type explosives and munitions. No explosives would be stored in the new Operations and Training Facility. Ammunition (1.4S) would be stored in the facility for operational ready response. Routine maintenance activities would be performed during the operational life of the facility.

Fencing and security lighting would be installed around some of the proposed area. Trenching would be conducted to connect existing sewer and utility hook-ups. It is estimated that about 2,000 linear feet of trenching would be required to install telephone, gas, water, and electrical service for the new facility.

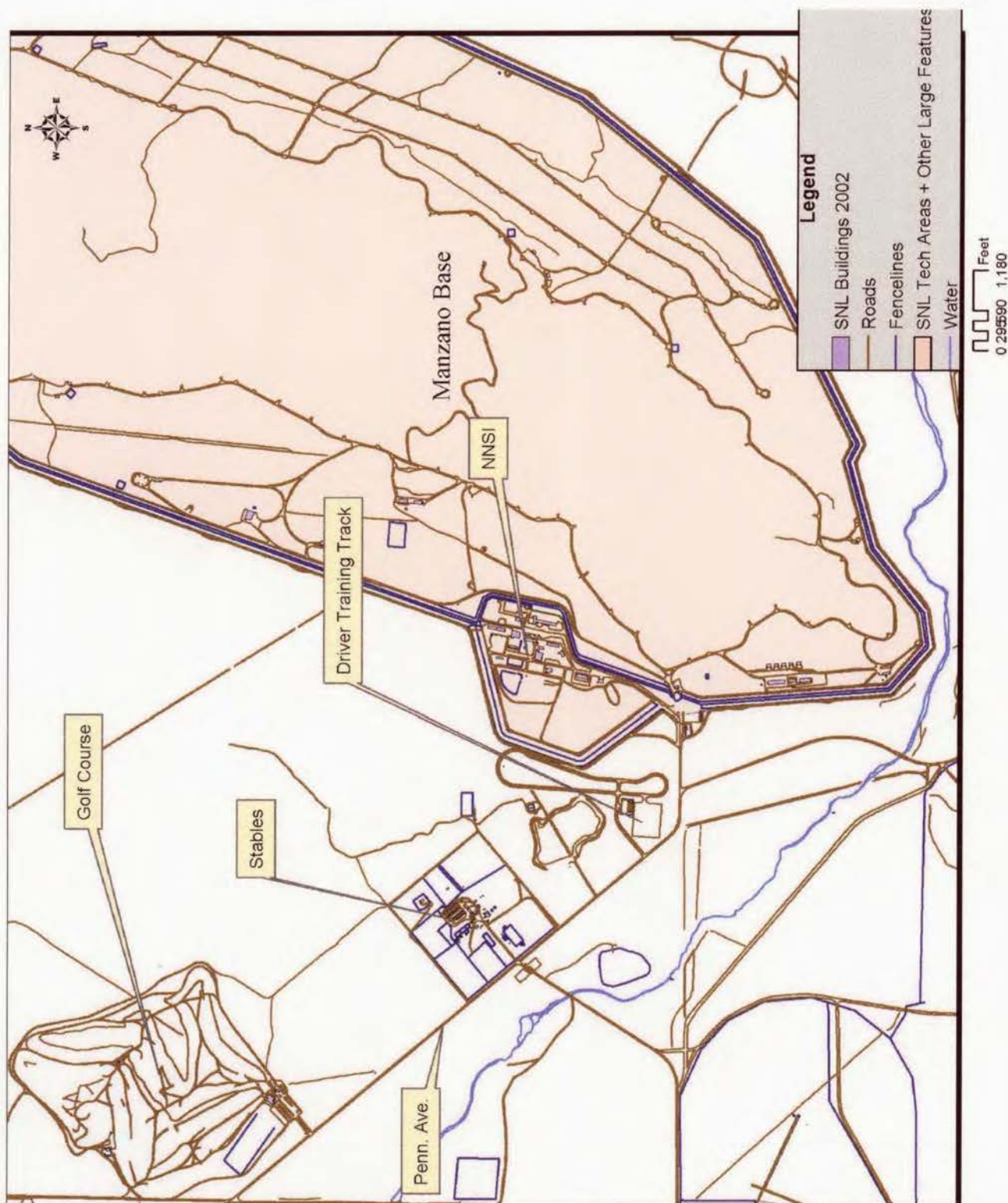


Figure 2. Location of Proposed Operations and Training Facility

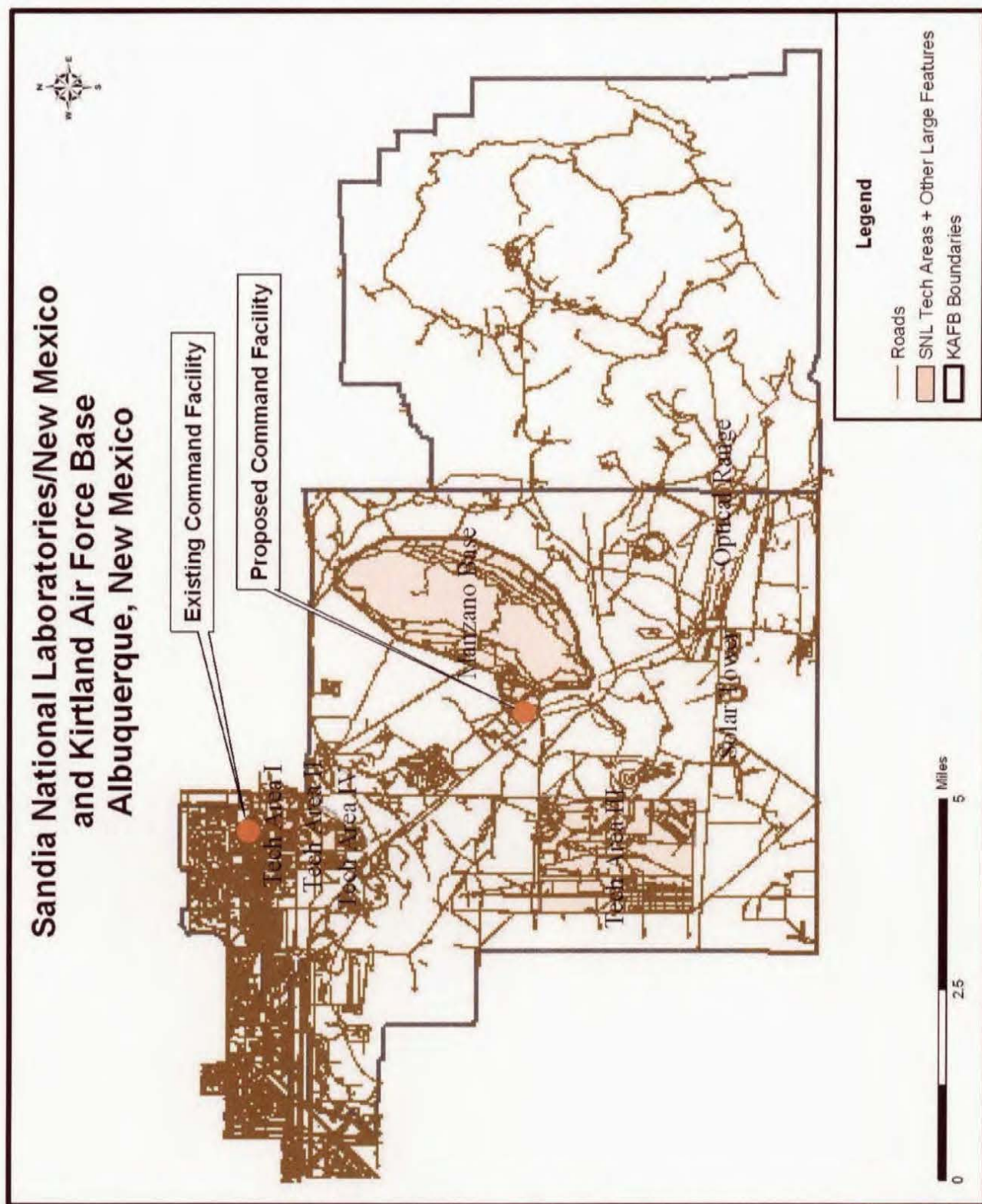
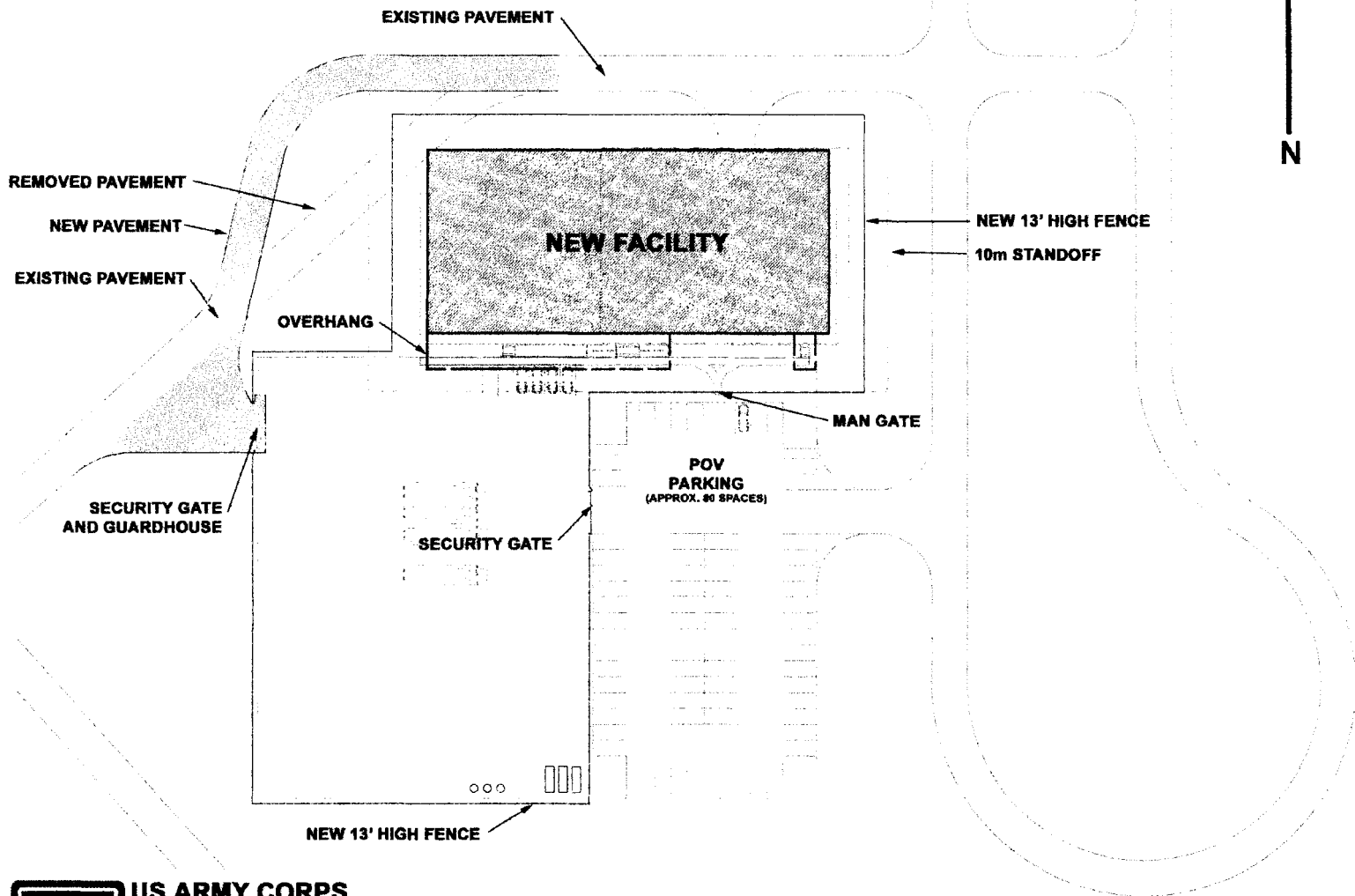


Figure 3. Locations of Existing Command and the Proposed Command Facilities

PRELIMINARY SITE LAYOUT
NNSA OST
FEBRUARY 20, 2004



**US ARMY CORPS
 OF ENGINEERS**
 Albuquerque District

Figure 4. Proposed Facility Layout on Driver Training Track

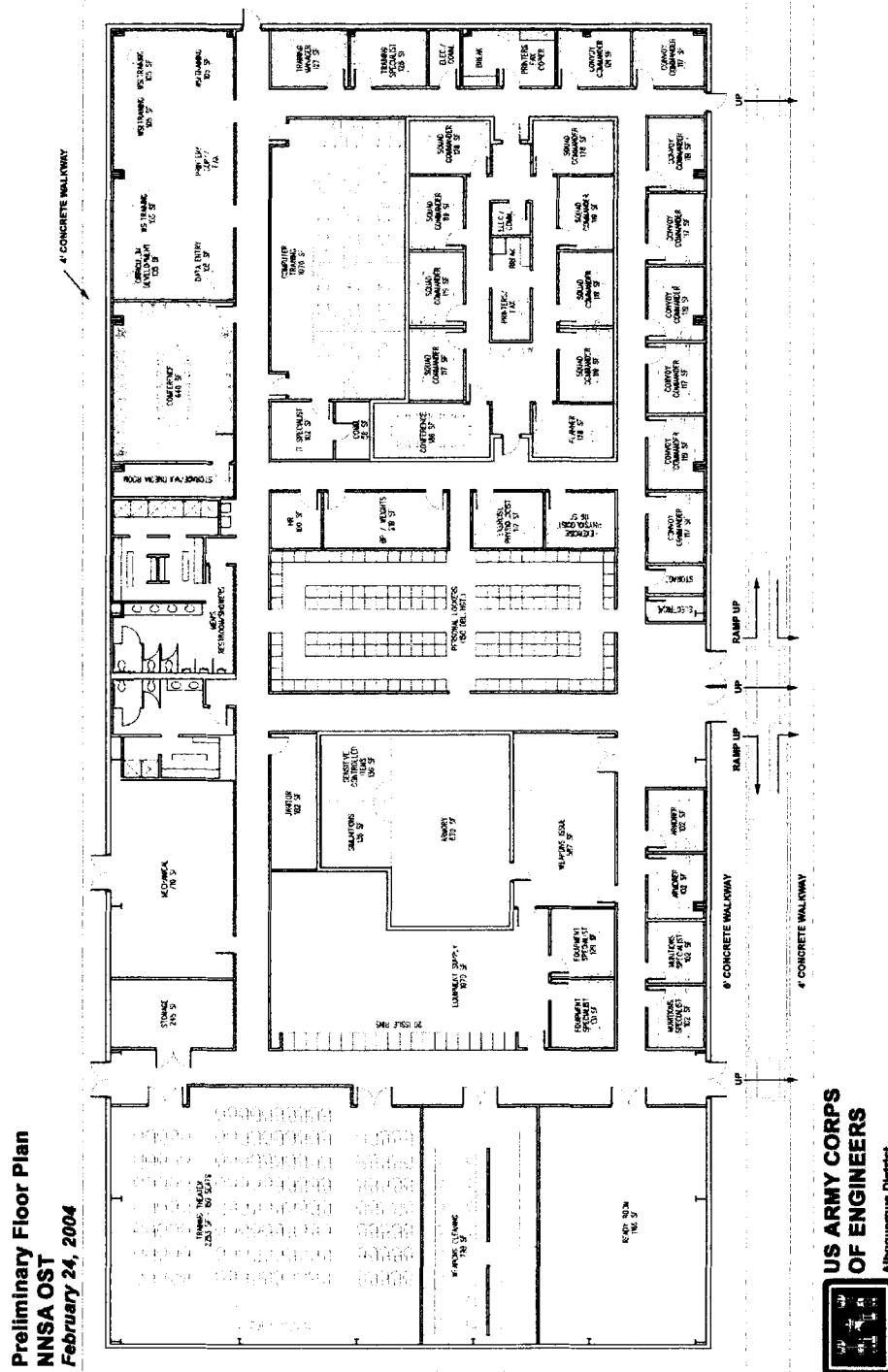


Figure 5. New Facility Layout

2.1.1 Site Preparation

The proposed construction site is disturbed and asphalted. An access road to the site currently exists. Because the facility would be constructed on an existing disturbed area, minimal clearing of vegetation from the site and immediate vicinity would be necessary. Additional paved access to the main driving pad would be constructed to improve the access by tractor-trailers. Only a dirt access currently exists. The road length would be less than 400 linear feet. Trenching would be required for utility hookup. Poles may be set if it is more practical to bring in electrical lines overhead. Any disturbed areas would be re-vegetated.

2.1.2 Construction

This project would require a variety of construction equipment including earth-moving equipment, a crane, paving equipment, concrete ready mix trucks, welding equipment, small tools, and other similar equipment. It will be a typical construction project for a small one-story facility. Approximately 50 workers would be involved with the construction from a variety of trades. It is likely that no more than 25 workers would be on site at any time as skills change as construction progresses. Workers would be required to wear personal protective equipment. Construction sounds at the site would occur mainly during daylight hours and would be largely confined to the general construction area. The construction period would be about seven months.

2.1.3 Operation

There would be a division of operations between the proposed command facility and those at the present command facility on NCO Bypass Road. Because the current location is collocated with the required vehicle, communications, and maintenance facilities, the agency's operational vehicles will remain at the NCO Bypass facility. Also, the proposed new facility will not accommodate some of the agent's upper staff and administrative personnel and some operational preparations activities. These personnel and activities would remain at the old facility.

Activities and personnel at the new facility would include; federal agents and their first line supervisors, training staff, armory and property management staff, physical trainers, planning, administrative and operational preparations/readiness staff. These activities are similar to those of a military or civilian law enforcement agency and the associated hazards are typical of these functions. While on a mission status, the agents would park their privately owned vehicles at the current secure privately owned vehicles parking area on NCO Bypass Road. If they are not on mission they will report to and park their privately owned vehicles at the new facility. The number of agents is being increased from 70 today to 90 by end of 2004, 110 by 2005, 125 by 2006, 140 by 2007 and 140 plus by 2008.

As stated, federal agent personnel levels will be 140 plus by 2008. On any given week, half would be on mission status and half would be on training status at the proposed new facility. Approximately 20 to 30 administrative personnel would be working at the site on a full-time basis. Routine maintenance actions would be performed during the operational use of the various structures and buildings.

2.2 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, no new Operations and Training Facility would be constructed at the Driver Training Track. As stated, the existing agent command has currently reached a critical stage in availability of space required to conduct operations. The No Action alternative would result in the National Nuclear Security Administration, Office of Secure Transportation's failure to meet workload requirements, therefore resulting in the negative impacts to the Nation's nuclear weapons programs.

2.3 Alternatives Considered, but Eliminated

2.3.1 Expanding the Existing Western Command Site

There is no room within the fenced complex to construct a new building or move in additional trailers to house the increased staff and necessary support material. The area outside the fence is occupied by the Department of Energy's Sandia National Laboratories' (Sandia) structures leaving no space to expand (Figure 6). Consequently, this alternative would not meet the purpose and need for agency action and was not evaluated in detail.

2.3.2 Sandia National Laboratories Technical Area II

Sandia's Technical Area II is currently an environmental restoration site. Sandia is in the process of cleaning up this site and has plans to utilize the site again once declared clean by the State of New Mexico. Therefore, this alternative would not meet the purpose and need for agency action and was not evaluated in detail.

2.3.3 Alternate Air Force Lands

The Driver Training Track is already permitted to the National Nuclear Security Administration for use by the Office of Secure Transportation's Transportation Safeguards Program. The Driver Training Track is already disturbed, has utilities, paved surfaces, existing access, and existing parking areas. For those reasons, Office of Secure Transportation did not request other locations for permitting and siting from the Air Force.

2.4 Comparison of Alternatives

Environmental impacts associated with the Proposed Action would be few and of limited extent and duration. The proposed construction site would be located in a previously disturbed and developed area with ongoing operational activity. This location would take advantage of an area currently dedicated and used for the Transportation Safeguards Program. Construction of new facilities at this location would enable and facilitate an orderly, on site expansion that would meet current and future workload requirements.

Under the No Action Alternative environmental impacts would remain negligible. Use of the Driver Training Track would be irregular as opposed to use on a daily basis. The effects would be to the Transportation Safeguards Program rather than to the environment. Programmatic effects would occur, such as delaying the quartering and training of increasing numbers of federal agents, and impairing the ability of the Office of Secure Transportation to meet current responsibilities with corresponding negative ramifications to the Nation's nuclear weapons program. Siting of the facility elsewhere, particularly in an undisturbed area, has the potential of causing more severe environmental effects. Time delays could also result in greater construction costs.

2.5 Decision to be Made

The decision to be made is whether the construction and operation of a new facility to quarter and train National Nuclear Security Administration federal agents warrants further environmental evaluation or a determination of a Finding of No Significant Impact to the environment.

2.6 Related Environmental Impact Statements (EISs) and Environmental Assessments (environmental assessments)

The Sandia National Laboratories, New Mexico Site Wide Environmental Impact Statement (Department of Energy/EIS- 0281) discusses the ongoing activities at the current agent command site on NCO Bypass Road at a staffing level of 35 agents. In chapter 6 of volume I, activities included administration functions, classroom training, physical fitness, equipment storage, agent trip preparation, and firearm maintenance and storage. The environmental impact statement states that none of these activities pose any major threat or harm to the environment, and that the potential for environmental impacts is low. Similar activities are proposed for the new command facility at the Driver Training Track to support the increases in agent manning levels. This environmental assessment does not tier its effects to the site wide environmental impact statement, rather it discusses the impacts independently against the proposed action and no action alternatives.

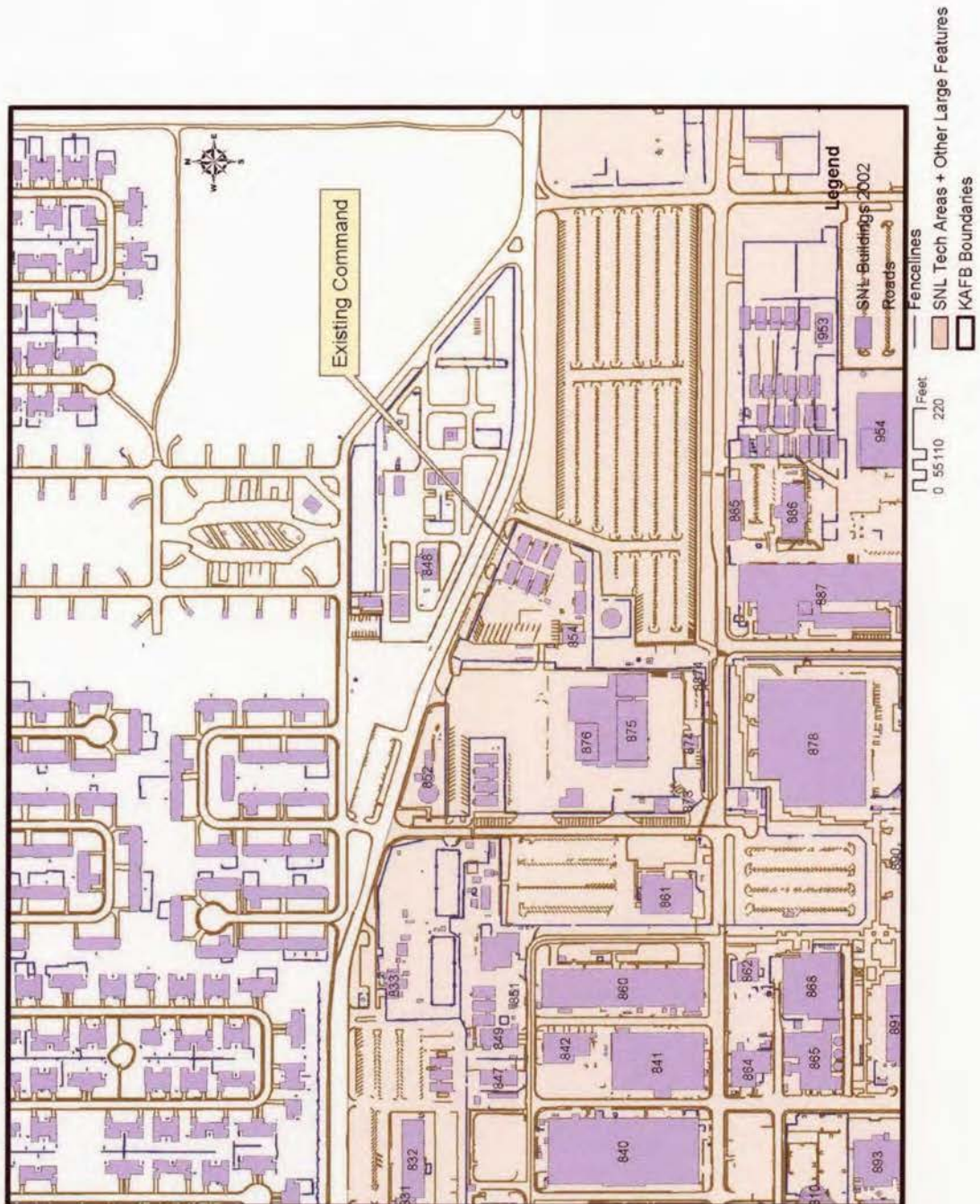


Figure 6. Location of Existing Command

3.0 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

3.1 History

In 1989, the Air Force permitted 104.85 acres of their lands to the Department of Energy for the construction, operation, and maintenance of a driver training course. As stated, this course is located on the north side of Pennsylvania Avenue between the Kirtland horse stables and the National Nonproliferation Security Institute (Figure 2). The Driver Training Track consists of a one mile long asphalt drive track and two asphalted pads. The smaller northern asphalt pad is 200 x 150 feet. The large drive pad to the south is 400 x 500 feet. The entire site is fairly isolated on the alluvial fan below the Air Force's Manzano Storage Area.

3.1.1 Current Mission

The Driver Training Track is still used to practice driving skills although not as frequent as historical usage. On the track, students develop techniques to safely drive tractor trailers and a variety of other vehicles used by the Office of Secure Transportation. On the large pad, students learn techniques in handling, backing, maneuvering, and docking tractor trailers. The small pad is fenced and used as a storage yard. Because the lack of space at the current agent command site, Office of Secure Transportation is proposing to construct an additional agent command facility at the Driver Training Track to quarter and train the new agents, support personnel and equipment.

3.2 Potential Environmental Issues

3.2.1 Air Quality

3.2.1.1 Affected Environment

Ambient air quality is regulated by the joint Albuquerque-Bernalillo County-Air Quality Control Board (ABC/AQCB). The ABC/AQCB also monitors compliance with federal, state, and local air quality regulations. The New Mexico Administrative Code, Title 20, Part 11.04 (20 NMAC 11.04), entitled "General Conformity," implements Section 176 (c) of the Clean Air Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 7401 et seq.), and regulations under 40 CFR 51, Subpart W, with respect to conformity of general federal actions in Bernalillo County. Bernalillo County has been designated as a maintenance area for carbon monoxide under the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQSs) and is in attainment for other federally regulated pollutants. Code 20 NMAC 11.04.11.1.2, paragraph B, establishes the emission threshold of 100 tons per year for carbon monoxide.

3.2.1.2 Proposed Action

Construction and operation of the new agent command operations and training facility would be expected to produce only temporary and localized air emissions. The effects on air quality would also be minimal and localized. Construction of the proposed facility would require operation of diesel-driven heavy equipment and light gasoline vehicles. Construction activities would include emissions from diesel units that total approximately 0.5 tons of carbon monoxide over the life of the construction project (includes trucks, dozers, backhoes, graders, dump trucks). Water would

be used for dust suppression during construction. Emissions from gasoline vehicles are estimated at 1.3 tons of carbon monoxide over the life of the construction project. These emissions are substantially below the 100 tons per year threshold and therefore a conformity analysis is not required.

Operational impacts to air quality would result from the increase in vehicle traffic from employees driving to and from work. There would be an increase in employees from 40 to 90 by the end of 2004 and up to a maximum of 140 plus by 2008. This increase would be less than one percent of the existing work force at Kirtland AFB. The emissions from natural gas heating and cooling systems would be similar to those of an office building.

3.2.1.3 No Action

There would be no new or additional impact from the No Action Alternative for this resource.

3.2.2 Biological Resources

3.2.2.1 Affected Environment

The plant community of the Driver Training Track is characterized by grassland. Associated species include blue grama grass, side-oats grama grass, and little blue stem grass, fourwing saltbush, broom snakeweed, and cane cholla.

The most sensitive wildlife habitat at Kirtland Air Force Base is found in the wetlands, canyons, and sites located in or adjacent to floodplains with either permanent or intermittent surface-water sources. These locations exhibit greater plant and animal diversity (IT Corporation 1995). There is no surface water present at the Driver Training Track. The track is not in a canyon but on a gently sloping alluvial fan. There are no prairie dog towns or prairie dog holes at the proposed site or in close proximity. No burrowing owls have been sited in the area.

No federally listed, proposed, or candidate species occur on Kirtland Air Force Base. There is no designated critical habitat.

All raptors and horned lizards are protected by the State of New Mexico and the general area surrounding the Driver Training Track provides habitat for a variety of species. The general area surrounding the asphalt pads is conducive to nesting habitat for birds protected under the Migratory Bird Species Act.

3.2.2.2 Proposed Action

There are no prairie dog towns or prairie dog holes at or near the project area. There are no federal or State of New Mexico threatened, endangered, or candidate species within the Driver Training Track or at the existing agent command facility. Construction activities would take place on previously disturbed lands, and on existing paved surfaces. Vegetation removal would be small. As such, there would be little opportunity for contact with wildlife or related habitat. There would be little, if any, change in area wildlife composition, population, and behavior because of the construction and operations. Sound levels during construction would likely be equivalent to or less than normal facility operations which can be at or below 80 dBA on average.

3.2.2.3 No Action

There would be no new or additional impact from the No Action Alternative for this resource.

3.2.3 Cultural Resources

3.2.3.1 Affected Environment

Geomorphologic and geoarchaeological studies indicate that, throughout the Kirtland Federal Complex (all facilities within Kirtland Air Force Base boundaries), prehistoric sites could be buried beneath both alluvial and aeolian sedimentary deposits. Both the USAF and Department of Energy have sponsored extensive archaeological surveys of properties within the boundaries of Kirtland Air Force Base. There are no cultural or historic sites in the proximity of the proposed location. (SNL, 1996. Cultural Resources Overview and Regulatory Assessment for Sandia National Laboratories, New Mexico)

As part of the preparation of Department of Energy's site wide environmental impact statement consultation was accomplished with 15 Native American Tribes with a cultural interest in the area to determine the presence of traditional cultural properties on Kirtland Air Force Base as well as on the lands withdrawn from the Forest Service (Department of Energy 1999). No specific locations were identified during these consultations, although some Tribes stated that they have concerns for cultural sites in the region of influence that are important to them.

3.2.3.2 Proposed Action

There are no cultural sites at the Driver Training Track. The track has been previously surveyed and no cultural artifacts were found. Should artifacts be found during the construction of the project, work would be stopped and an archaeologist would be consulted. Consequently, there would be no anticipated impact to any cultural or historical property from the proposed activities.

3.2.3.3 No Action Alternative

There would be no new or additional impact from the No Action Alternative for this resource.

3.2.4 Water Resources, Including Wetlands and Floodplains

3.2.4.1 Affected Environment

No perennial, surface-water resources exist at or near the Driver Training Track. There are no floodplains or wetlands associated with this proposed location. There are two ephemeral drainage courses north of the existing pads that traverse the driving course. The direction of groundwater flow in the area is approximately northwest. Depth to groundwater under the track is about 500 feet.

3.2.4.2 Proposed Action

There are no floodplains or wetlands in the immediate area. Construction of the Operations and Training Facility is far removed from any floodplain. Consequently, there would be no impacts to floodplain values. No other surface-water resources exist in the immediate area of the proposed location. Best management practices would be implemented to prevent erosion and migration of soils from the site caused by storm water or wind during construction activities. Water quality would not change as a result of operations of the office and training facility.

3.2.4.3 No Action Alternative

There would be no new or additional impact from the No Action Alternative for this resource.

3.2.5 Geology and Soils

3.2.5.1 Affected Environment

Generalized surface geology in the area is of the Tertiary/Quaternary-type Pleistocene units, trending to Precambrian igneous higher up the mountain such as in the areas of the proposed project (SNL/NM GIS, 1999. Map of Generalized Surface Geology of the Kirtland Federal Complex). Soil types in the immediate area of the proposed site are based on the Tesajo-Millet and San Ildefonso Series (SNL/NM, 1999. Map of Major Soil Types at the Kirtland Federal Complex). Major faults through the area include the Manzano Fault, that trends southeast to northeast across the region of the proposed site, and the Tijeras Fault, that trends roughly southwest to northeast across the region (SNL/NM GIS, 1999. Map of Major Faults on the Kirtland Federal Complex).

3.2.5.2 Proposed Action

Project activities proposed at the site would result in minimal disturbance of surface soils due to the minor amount of trenching, foundation construction, and construction activities on paved surfaces.

3.2.5.3 No Action Alternative

There would be no new or additional impact from the No Action Alternative for this resource.

3.2.6 Safety and Occupational Health

3.2.6.1 Affected Environment

Office of Secure Transportation performs all activities in accordance with Department of Energy, State, and Federal ES&H regulations and requirements.

3.2.6.2 Proposed Action

Construction

National Nuclear Security Administration would be responsible for all ES&H review and regulatory compliance requirements related to activities conducted at the site. All construction activities would be performed in accordance with all Occupational Safety and Health Administration requirements. The proposed action is not expected to result in an adverse effect on the health of construction workers. Potentially, exposure to various hazards or injuries is possible during the construction. Adverse effects could range from relatively minor (e.g., cuts or sprains) to major (e.g., broken bones, or fatalities). Appropriate personal protection programs would be a routine part of the construction activities and would involve the use of such personal protection equipment as gloves, hard hats, hard-toed boots, eye protection, and hearing protection. To prevent serious injuries, construction contractors are required to submit and adhere to a contractor safety plan. Under normal operating conditions, there would be a relatively low health risk from an office environment to the agents and the support staff as would be expected from a military police

operation.

Storage of Explosives and Munitions

Department of Energy applies the same quantity-distance criteria as the Air Force. The Department of Energy Explosives Safety Manual requires that quantity-distance be in accordance with the Department of Defense 6055.9 STD. Magazine criteria is the same. The GOLAN magazines are well characterized, as stated in the 377 ABW/SEW response. The engineering design of the GOLAN magazines is such that, in the event of a detonation of the entire contents (22 lbs), an individual standing at a distance of 30 ft. will not be exposed to more than the allowable blast overpressure for inhabited building distance, which provides for an allowable level of safety. Expected physical effects would be a possible temporary hearing threshold shift. Fragments from the detonation of the contents of the GOLAN magazine would be contained, by engineering design.

The "Conex" containers will be used for storage of Hazard Class 1. Division 3 and 4 materials. The effects of initiation of the 1.3 materials is a mass fire of the contents. 1.4 materials are listed as having a moderate fire effect. In both 1.3 and 1.4 materials, there may be a projection of fire brands, as with any fire. The quantity distance for storage of these materials is well characterized and siting will be in accordance with that criteria. The effects on an individual from burning of 1.3 and 1.4 materials are primarily thermal, with no blast or fragmentation exposure. The thermal effects are limited by the application of the prescribed distance.

The maximum amount of explosives permitted to be stored in a location is determined by the application of the quantity-distance mathematical formulae. Operational requirements may dictate a lower amount, but the maximum permitted is determined by the tried and true methods employed within the Department of Defense and Department of Energy communities.

Operations in armories are consistent with the Department of Energy Security Force requirements and are governed by the Department of Energy Explosives Safety Manual and Section 161.K of The Atomic Energy Act of 1954 as amended and Title 18 USC, Chapter 40, Section 845. Only firearms would be stored in the armory. Small arms munitions in the supply room are stored in DOT approved packages. Only ammunition required for operational purposes are in the supply room at any given time. Access to the facility is restricted to those personnel requiring access and routine exposure to personnel not associated with the operation is not permitted. In the event of an initiation of small arms munitions in the supply, personnel present in the building would not experience any adverse effects due to low hazard class of 1.4S munitions and facility layout.

3.2.6.3 No Action Alternative

The drive track would continue as a driving course where students familiarize, train, and practice driving techniques with tractor trailers in combination with other vehicles. Driving hazards would be much less than on public roads because of the presence of instructors and low speed driving.

3.2.7 Noise Affected Environment

Sounds in the general area of the Driver Training Track are limited to vehicular traffic on Pennsylvania Avenue, the wind, wildlife, and an occasional overhead aircraft associated with both military and commercial flights. Increased sound levels associated with the driver training course generally remain low, commensurate with a small number of vehicles, and personnel.

3.2.7.1 Proposed Action

Construction sound would be limited to daylight hours and would not be expected to exceed safe levels as identified in the Occupational Safety and Health Administration Standards found at 29 CFR 1910.95 except in the immediate area of the heavy equipment. All Occupational Safety and Health Administration requirements would be met. Construction sounds would be temporary and localized. Sound levels would be expected to dissipate to background levels with increasing distance from the immediate construction site. Standard sound levels resulting from an office building and occasional start-up of vehicles would be expected from operations.

3.2.7.2 No Action Alternative

There would be no new or additional impact from the No Action Alternative for this resource.

3.2.8 Hazardous Materials, Hazardous Waste and Solid Waste

3.2.8.1 Affected Environment

The Federal Agent Facility Western Command utilizes standard industrial chemical products in small amounts for general cleaning, office use, sanitation, and other purposes. No chemicals are kept on site in amounts exceeding any Threshold Planning Quantities (TPQs) which require notification reporting or emergency management/risk planning under 29 CFR 1910.119 "List of Highly Hazardous Chemicals, Toxics and Reactives," 40 CFR 68.130 "List of Regulated Toxic Substances and Threshold Quantities for Accidental Release Prevention," or 40 CFR 355 "List of Extremely Hazardous Substances and their Threshold Planning Quantities;" or in amounts that could exceed any Reportable Quantity releases to the environment (40 CFR 302.4 "List of Hazardous Substances and their Reportable Quantities"). Small arms ammunition is stored under controlled conditions throughout the facility. Standard office-type wastes are generated and disposed of in accordance with applicable solid waste requirements. No standard industrial chemical products are used in a manner that generates a regulated hazardous waste stream, and the facility is not a hazardous waste generator under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act. Solid waste is disposed of at the Kirtland Air Force Base landfill.

3.2.8.2 Proposed Action

No hazardous material, asbestos containing material or lead based paint would be used during construction or operations. Should any hazardous waste be generated, it would be removed from the work site and disposed of in accordance with site policies or the SNL/NM Hazardous Waste Program. The construction contractor would remove and properly dispose of any construction debris and trash.

3.2.8.3 No Action Alternative

There would be no new or additional impact from the No Action Alternative under this issue area.

3.2.9 Socioeconomics

3.2.9.1 Affected Environment

Kirtland Air Force Base is located in Bernalillo County in the Albuquerque metropolitan statistical area of central New Mexico. The region has grown by a factor of six since 1940.

Large concentrations of Hispanic and Native American populations reside to the north and south of the City of Albuquerque, including the residents of 10 Indian Reservations in the immediate region. An estimated 22 to 25 percent of all workers in the region are employed by the public sector. This estimate includes military personnel, government employees, or contract personnel.

3.2.9.2 Proposed Action

Construction of the facility would require the services of architectural, engineering, and construction firms; however, such support would be temporary. The combination of the existing command and the proposed new operations and training facility at the Driver Training Track would increase from 70 to 140 plus over the next four years. Additionally, operations would continue providing an economic benefit to the local community through potential and related expenditures by the employees and their families.

3.2.9.3 No Action Alternative

There would be no new or additional impact from the No Action Alternative, socio-economics perspective.

3.2.10 Environmental Justice

3.2.10.1 Affected Environment

Presidential Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations, requires identifying and considering, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of Federal programs, policies, and activities on minority and low-income populations. Approximately 51 percent of New Mexico's population is minority, and an estimated 24 percent are listed as in poverty or designated as having low income. Minority populations numbering above the state average live in areas that border Kirtland Air Force Base to the northeast, west, and south. Areas with greater than the state average of low-income populations border Kirtland Air Force Base to the west and south.

3.2.10.2 Proposed Action

There is little potential for the Proposed Action to have a disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effect on low-income and minority populations that are located outside the boundaries of Kirtland Air Force Base. The area of the Proposed Action is located in a remote area of Kirtland Air Force Base with no inhabitants within the area of potential effect. As stated, there would be no substantial economic ramifications resulting from the Proposed Action. There would also be little change in facility operations following completion of renovation and construction activities. The absence of nearby populations (including low-income and minority populations), the limited scope of the Proposed Action, and minimal effects do not present conditions for an Environmental Justice issue.

3.2.10.3 No Action Alternative

There would be no new or additional impact from the No Action Alternative perspective of environmental justice.

3.2.11 Installation Restoration Program and Environmental Restoration Project Sites

3.2.11.1 Affected Environment

In 1989, the Department of Energy created the Office of Environmental Restoration and Waste Management. The goal of this office is to implement the department's policy of ensuring that its past, present, and future operations do not threaten human or environmental health and safety. The current mission of the Department of Energy, National Nuclear Security Administration, Environmental Restoration project is intended to determine the nature and extent of hazardous and radioactive contamination, and to restore any sites where such materials pose a threat to human health or the environment.

In addition to the National Nuclear Security Administration Environmental Restoration Project, Kirtland Air Force Base has established the Installation Restoration Program. The Installation Restoration Program directs the planning, investigation, and cleanup of Air Force hazardous and solid waste sites at Kirtland Air Force Base. Both the National Nuclear Security Administration Environmental Restoration Project and Kirtland Air Force Base Installation Restoration Program coordinate their activities with the New Mexico Environmental Department and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 6.

There are no National Nuclear Security Administration Environmental Restoration or U.S. Air Force Installation Restoration Program sites in close proximity to the proposed location. There are Installation Restoration Program sites located inside the Manzano Storage Area; however, they are separated from the proposed site by the Manzano Storage Area security fences and buffer zone (SNL/NM GIS, 1996. National Nuclear Security Administration Environmental Restoration Sites and Air Force Installation Restoration Program Sites at Kirtland Air Force Base).

3.2.11.2 Proposed Action

There would be no impact to any Environmental Restoration or Installation Restoration Program Sites from the Proposed Action. As stated above, there are no current hazards at this site related to contamination of the surface or subsurface soils. Consequently, ground-disturbing activities such as grading and drainage improvements would have no potential to promote the spread of contaminated soils.

3.2.11.3 No Action Alternative

There would be no new or additional impacts under the No Action Alternative from activities associated with Air Force Installation Restoration Program or National Nuclear Security Administration Environmental Restoration Program sites.

4.0 CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

The Proposed Action entails construction of a new building with a continuation of ongoing operations at an already disturbed location. The consequences of the proposed action on air quality, biological & cultural resources, water, geology & soils, human safety & occupational health, noise, waste managements and socio-economics resources would be negligible. These incremental effects, when taken in the context of other Department of Energy, U.S. Department of Defense, Federal, State, and local activities, would not add substantially to the cumulative impacts of those activities. For this environmental assessment, the area of influence would be in the close proximity of the Driver Training Track, an area that is sparsely populated. There are no ongoing activities and no other future foreseeable activities planned in this area. There are no state or private holdings in this area. Activities in the area of influence are the Nonproliferation and National Security Institute, the Kirtland horse stables and the Kirtland golf course. The National Nonproliferation Security Institute provides classroom like training and professional development to the security personnel throughout the Department of Energy. These activities in the area have negligible effects on the local environment as well. Therefore, the effects of the Proposed Action, when combined with the effects resulting from common issues of actions taken by the Department of Energy, U.S. Department of Defense, Federal, State, and local entities, would not result in cumulatively significant effects.

5.0 AGENCIES AND INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED

National Nuclear Security Administration has determined that no consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service regarding the potential effect of the Proposed Action on federally protected threatened or endangered species, or their critical habitat, is necessary because of their absence. Additionally, no consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office is required because of the absence of cultural and heritage resources.

The following agencies and individuals were contacted during the preparation of this environmental assessment:

Sandia National Laboratories, Environmental Management Department
U.S. Air Force, Kirtland Air Force Base, 377 MSG/CEVQ
U.S Army, Corps of Engineers, Albuquerque District, Regulatory Branch

6.0 LIST OF PREPARERS

The following individual was primarily responsible for the preparation of this environmental assessment:

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